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Dr. Maurice Leatherbury, Senior Director of Academic Computing Services, was so busy making campus computing news this month that he didn't have time to write a column. He'll be back next month to fill you in on what he has been up to. Meanwhile, there are some important notices for Academic and Administrative mainframe users on this page.

[Time to Renew](#)

If you purchased a **Premium Remote Access** Service subscription for the fall semester, and you want to keep it, you will need to renew it. If you weren't associated with UNT last semester, your UNT Internet Account will be disabled in February, 1999 unless you take action. Details for renewal of both these services are contained in this article.

[Holiday Links](#)

What better way to spend your free time this holiday season than surfing the World Wide Web? (You WILL have some free time, won't you?). Whether you're just surfing for the fun of it, looking for some last minute gifts, or want to send electronic greetings, there's probably a Web site to fill your needs. This article will get you started on hours of holiday surfing.

Merry Christmas

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Network Connection

By [Dr. Philip Baczewski](#), Associate Director of Academic Computing

What's in a Name?

Part 2: some new developments in the organization of the internet

In my last *Internet Connections* column ([October, 1998](#)), I provided an overview of Internet addresses and how address names relate to address numbers. From that article, it should be apparent how important addresses are to the operation of the Internet. The orderly and unique application of addresses lays at the basis of what makes the Internet such a universal and useful medium for communication.

Most people just take the Internet for granted, without realizing that there is quite a bit of work which goes on to preserve as well as extend the standards developed for Internet communication and to keep the Internet's underlying technical operations running smoothly. For most of the life of the Internet, those functions have been supported by the U.S. Government in the form of grants and contracts with non- and for-profit entities. This is about to change, marking a big step in the life of the Internet -- a step in the maturation process of the Internet as it becomes more and more integrated with our everyday lives.

A New Authority

Hardly noticed amongst the current appetite in Washington for political scandal was the fact that in October, the Clinton administration gave the go-ahead for the transfer of the Internet's technical management to a new non-profit corporation, the Internet Corporation of Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN, see www.icann.org). Previously, most of this function was done by the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA), run out of a non-profit center at UCLA. The ICANN is a non-profit corporation, with a board of trustees that is supposed to be representative of its constituent users, namely, Internet Service Providers, Educational Institutions, Corporations, and end-users. It is supposed to be free from the undue influence of any one of its constituencies, allowing it to operate for the good of the Internet.

Currently, this authority is spread amongst a number of organizations. The IANA served as the "root" addressing authority (see, www.iana.org). Several other organizations provided name registration services, such as Network Solutions Inc., who runs the site, internic.net, serving the top-level domains .com, .net, .org, and .edu. Registration services for other top-level domains (like .us and .ca) are provided by the American Registry for Internet Numbers (ARIN, www.arin.org). This organization serves all of the Americas, including both continents. Similar organizations exist for Europe and Asia.

The Internic will continue its services at least until its contract runs out in 2002. The impact of the privatization of the Internet plumbing on other registration services is yet to be seen. The development of the ICANN will be watched closely by those who follow the Internet's development. If it succeeds, the Internet will have grown far beyond an interesting experiment requiring governmental support to survive. How it succeeds may determine the future of the Internet. If it succeeds in being free from the influence of any one constituency, then an easily accessible Internet which supports education and public action as well as it does commerce may be the end result.

The Passing of a Pioneer

A sad irony within this story of Internet technical workings is the passing of Jonathan Postel. As final plans were being made to create the ICANN, in early October, National Public Radio broadcast and interview with Dr. Postel, a professor at UCLA and founder of the IANA referenced above. It was quite shocking, therefore, to hear of his death on October 16, 1998, after undergoing emergency surgery to repair an artificial valve in his heart.

Not many can claim to be a true pioneer of the Internet.* Many have contributed along the way, but Jonathan Postel was there at the very beginning, when the ARPANet was a research project starting at UCLA. ICANN can trace its routes to the very first batch of addresses that Postel wrote down on paper in order to keep track of them. His involvement continued and as an expert in Internet addressing and editor for the collection of Internet Request for Comment articles (RFCs), his influence on the development of the Internet never waned (see <http://www.iana.org/postel/postel-tribute.html>).

It's ironic that but for the passing of Jonathan Postel, the story of the creation of the ICANN would have remained even more obscure than it is. In spite of the importance of this action, most outside the Internet technical community are probably not aware of it. It shows how much we can take something for granted as an important part of our lives, without knowing in the least how it works or what forces might be at work which could take it away from us. When a 55 year old Internet genius is suddenly taken from us, it should remind us of something else: this life we are given is a precious gift which never should be taken for granted.

* Another computing pioneer has recently been in the news. Douglas Engelbart, often called the father of the mouse, was honored at a day-long tribute at Stanford University. See ["Upgrading the Human OS"](#) for further information about Engelbart and the tribute.

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List of the Month

Each month we highlight one Internet, USENET Special Interest Group (SIG), or similar mailing list.

The Internet Scout Project

The Internet Scout Project (<http://scout.cs.wisc.edu/scout/index.html>) isn't a mailing list, it is a collection of mailing lists, and much much more. It is designed to "show you the way to the best resources on the Internet--then you can choose what's best for you. Librarians and educators do the filtering for you, reading hundreds of announcements each week looking for the online resources most valuable to the education community."

Some of the lists available from this site are:

- **[The Scout Report](#)** -- "the flagship publication of the Internet Scout Project. Published every Friday both on the web and by email, it provides a fast, convenient way to stay informed of valuable resources on the Internet."
- **[The KIDS Report](#)** -- "a biweekly publication produced by K-12 students as a resource to other K-12 students. It is an ongoing, cooperative effort of 12 classrooms from around the United States."
- **[Net-happenings](#)** -- seeks to "distribute announcements about Internet resources to network users and providers, and especially to the K-12 community. It is meant to be comprehensive, therefore postings number between 40-60 per day, and are available via an email distribution list in individual or digest (cumulative) format, or here at the Website as soon as they are posted to the mailing list, with final postings being made by 3pm CST/CDT - Monday-Friday. "
- **[Net-Newsletters](#)** -- attempts to "combine in one place the best of the Internet's regularly published e-zines, allowing users to read or browse all or none of them from the same mailing list or Website. Users who want to keep current on various aspects of Internet development and technology can choose to subscribe to the mailing list, which sends two or more newsletters together in digest format, or to browse the new Website for today's postings or archives of past postings."
- **[NEW-LIST](#)** -- a mailing list that provides "the Internet community with prompt notification of the creation of a new mailing list on any given topic."
- **[K12 NEWSLETTERS](#)** -- combines "in one place the best of the Internet's various K12 newsletters."

You can subscribe to any of the lists above from this page:

<http://scout18.cs.wisc.edu/cgi-bin/lwgate/listsavail.html>

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By [Mark Wilcox](#), Campus Web Administrator

Recent Developments

Our central Web server, [www.unt.edu](#), set new records for November. For October and November 1998 we have averaged over 3.8 million hits for those two months. To put that in perspective, we had only 1.5 million hits in October 1997 . We also averaged over 80,000 unique computers that connected to us. I would estimate that to be somewhere between 50 to 90,000 users. Not bad!

We also added our 100th WebCT class into production in November. We have about 60 or so being made ready for Spring. I expect enrollment in WebCT will be somewhere between 2,000 and 10,000 students this spring.

AOL, Netscape, Sun, and the Future of the Internet*

Probably the biggest computer news in the past month was America On-Line buying out Netscape. If you own stock in Netscape you definitely came out a winner. For the rest of us, it will remain to be seen what happens. I generally think it will be a good move. Netscape needed a solid cash flow and AOL needed a way out of it's browser deal with Microsoft. Sun Microsystems, who is also involved in the deal, gets access to the Netscape server developers and gains a way to continue to make sure JAVA is on the desktop. While this is a business decision (and as a business decision I think it was a wise one), it is also a good thing for computing in general. Many people are worried that AOL will just brand stuff Netscape, while allowing the company to disappear. I don't think this will be the case. AOL has let CompuServe and ICQ run pretty much as they did before AOL bought them. They even still compete with these companies to some degree. AOL also realizes that Netscape's best resource, it's employees, needs to be retained at all costs. Otherwise they're likely to head out the door and go work for someone else like Microsoft. Netscape's consulting business also gets a leg up with this deal.

Another benefit will be for companies that want to get on the Net. Now this new company can set you up with server hardware built by Sun (who makes the majority of the server hardware that runs the backbone of the Internet), running Netscape software (the people who "built" the Web) and if you need help getting your employees on-line from home or on the road, AOL is there for you (and with 14 million subscribers they know something about helping people getting hooked up).

This of course isn't the idealistic picture of the Net where everyone has free access. A good chunk of the people on the Net are there trying to make money or cut costs for their company by using technology to slim down their company. This AOL/Netscape/Sun entity can really help with that.

This new entity also isn't the death of the Net as we know it either. The Net is way too vast for that. If Microsoft, which controls over 90% of the desktop market, couldn't reel it in I doubt anyone else can either. The new merger just makes it easier to get more people on-line. And that, I think, is the most important thing for the long term prospects of the Net.

Until next time.

Mark

* This month's [Network Connection](#) also discusses the future of the Internet, but from a different perspective.

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Short Courses

By [Claudia Lynch](#), *Benchmarks Editor*

ACS Short Courses are over for the fall semester. We will continue to offer similar courses in the spring. Follow [this link](#) if you would like to find out more about the short courses that ACS typically offers.

Customized Short Courses

Faculty members can request customized short courses from ACS, geared to their class needs. Other groups can request special courses also. Contact ACS for more information (ISB 119, 565-4068, lynch@unt.edu).

Especially for Faculty and Staff Members

Staff and faculty members can take courses offered through the [Human Resources](#) Department. The [Center for Distributed Learning](#) is offering courses especially for Faculty Members. They are currently taking registration for spring classes. Topics include Windows 95, PowerPoint, Planning Your Course, Basic Video Conferencing, and a series of classes concerning putting course materials on the World Wide Web.

Technical Training for campus network managers is available through the Campus-Wide Networks division of the Computing Center. Some of the [seminars](#), such as one on disaster recovery/business continuity planning techniques, may be of interest to others on campus as well.

Alternate Forms of Training

The [Training](#) Web site has all sorts of information about alternate forms of training. Training tapes, Computer Based Training (CBT) and Web-based training are some of the alternatives offered. There are also handouts for computer training (Microsoft Office 97 and Windows 95) on the following topics:

- GroupWise 5.2 -- Handout for Win95/NT
- FAQ for GroupWise 5.2
- Info on GroupWise for Win3.1
- Computers - Back to the Basics
- Introduction to Windows 95
- Introduction to Word 97
- Advanced Word 97 - MailMerge It Together
- Introduction to Excel 97
- Introduction to PowerPoint 97
- Introduction to Remedy (THE Call-Tracking Program)
- Using Netscape Communicator and the UNT Home Page

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IRC News

Minutes provided by Sue Ellen Richey,
Recording Secretary



IRC Regular Voting Members: Ginny Anderson, Fiscal Affairs; Donna Asher, Administrative Affairs; Walter Bowen, Academic Administration; Bill Buntain, Communications Program Group; Sue Byron, Faculty Senate; Carolyn Cunningham, Student Affairs; Paul Dworak, College of Music and Standards & Cooperation Program Group; Don Grose, Libraries; Jenny Jopling, Instruction Program Group; Joneel Harris, Administrative Program Group; Allen Livingston, Graduate Student Council; Dennis Mueller, Research Program Group (on Sabbatical); Ramu Muthiah, School of Community Services; Robert Nimocks, Director, Information Technology, UNTHSC; Steve Oeffner, UNT Health Science Center Russ Pensyl, School of Visual Arts; Patrick Pluscht, Distributed Learning Team; Jim Poirot College of Education; Mark Rorvig, Research Program Group (acting for Dennis Mueller who is on Sabbatical); Kathleen Swigger, College of Arts and Sciences; Neal Tate, University Planning Council; Philip Turner, Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs for Distance Education and Dean of the School of Library and Information Resources (Chair, IRC); Virginia Wheeless, Chancellor; John Windsor, College of Business. **IRC Ex-officio Nonvoting Members:** Leslie Bowden, Telecommunications; Wil Clark, GALMAC; Jim Curry, Microcomputer Maintenance Shop; Michael Forster, UNT Health Science Center; Richard Harris, Computing Center; Coy Hoggard, Computing Center; Maurice Leatherbury, Computing Center; Sue Ellen Richey, Computing Center (Recording Secretary). [As of 11/98]

No new IRC minutes were available at publication time. To see past IRC minutes, consult our [back issues](#).n

IRC Meeting Schedule

The [IRC](#) generally meets on the third Tuesday of each month, from 2-4 p.m., in the Administration Building Board Room. An exception to that schedule will occur in March of 1999 when it will meet on the second Tuesday to accommodate the Spring Break schedule.

All meetings of the IRC, its program groups, and other committees, are open to all faculty, staff, and students.n

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Staff Activities

Transitions

The following are new employees:

- **Marsha Parr**, Data Entry Operator.
- **Ravi Bhamidipati**, part-time I/O consultant

The following people no longer work in the Computing Center:

- **Philip Buhler**, Print Services Supervisor in Production Control.
- **Joey Hoffmann**, Interactive Learning Services programmer moved to the Center for Distributed Learning when it was [created](#) in September.
- **Kay Prewitt**, Data Entry operator, retired this month.
- **Yung Man (Tiffany) Li**, part-time I/O Consultant.
- **Nejat Ahmed**, part-time I/O consultant.
- **Ruey-Chyi (Rachel) Liao**, part-time CPU Operator.
- **Jess Peterson Mendonsa**, part-time report distributor.

Promotions, Transfers, and Other Changes

- Since Richard Harris is now Associate Vice President for Computing and Communications Services (as reported in last month's [Benchmarks Online](#)), **Dr. Maurice Leatherbury** has a new title: **Senior Director Academic Computing and Assistant to the Associate Vice President for Computing & Communications Services**. We will continue to refer to him as the Senior Director of Academic Computing unless there is a specific reason to mention his full title, however.

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By [Randal Milholland](#), Documentation Assistant

Santa's Modern Replacement for "Coal in the Stocking"



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SUBscribe unt-benchmarks *your name*

For example: SUBscribe unt-benchmarks Jane Doe

To **Unsubscribe**:

1. Send the e-mail to listserv@unt.edu
2. In the body of the message type:

Signoff unt-benchmarks

3. Send.

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